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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TEGUCIGALPA 001107

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STATE FOR WHA
CABLE CLEARED BY WHA A/S TOM SHANNON

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [HO](#)

SUBJECT: TFH01: WHA A/S SHANNON MEETINGS WITH DE FACTO
REGIME LEADER MICHELETTI

Classified By: Ambassador Hugo Llorens for reasons 1.4 (b & d)

11. (C) Summary. Assistant Secretary of State (A/S) for Western Hemisphere Affairs (WHA) Thomas Shannon, accompanied by WHA Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary (PDAS) Craig Kelly, National Security Council Senior Advisor for Western Hemisphere Affairs Daniel Restrepo, and the Ambassador met on October 28 and on October 29, with de facto regime leader Roberto Micheletti. The second meeting took place after the signing of the Guaymuras agreement. During the October 28 meeting, A/S Shannon urged Micheletti on October 28 to reach a negotiated solution to his country's political crisis. He told Micheletti that an agreement would pave the way for Honduras' reintegration into the international community and the international financial institutions. Micheletti told A/S Shannon that the events of June 28 had pre-empted a coup by President Jose Manuel "Mel" Zelaya, who stole government funds and took direction from Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez. Micheletti said he was concerned about the termination of U.S. assistance, but that Hondurans would survive without it. Micheletti said the general election scheduled for November 29 was the solution to the country's crisis and that nothing would prevent it from taking place. A/S Shannon told Micheletti on October 29, after the signing of the Guaymuras Agreement, that the U.S. wanted to support Honduras in the implementation of the agreement as well as with the elections. Micheletti pledged to abide by the agreement. End Summary.

12. (C) The Assistant Secretary told Micheletti on October 28 that he traveled to Tegucigalpa to speak directly to the main actors in the country's political crisis regarding the importance of reaching a negotiated solution within the framework of the San Jose/Guaymuras dialogue. A/S Shannon told Micheletti that the San Jose process was launched to allow Hondurans themselves to conduct a dialogue and find a solution to their crisis. A/S Shannon said the U.S. did not want to impose a solution, but believed that the commissioners representing Micheletti and Zelaya at the Guaymuras dialogue should return to the negotiations with clear instructions from Micheletti and President Zelaya to reach an agreement. A/S Shannon told Micheletti that, while the commissioners had made great progress in the talks, the perception remained that Micheletti was not negotiating in good faith and was just trying to run out the clock until the November 29 general election. A/S Shannon said it would be

difficult for the U.S. to provide assistance to Honduras in the absence of an agreement. He added that an agreement would pave the way for Honduras' reintegration into the international community and the international financial institutions. A/S Shannon told Micheletti that the U.S. could provide guarantees to ensure that any agreement reached is implemented.

History Will Judge

13. (C) Micheletti lamented that the international community had failed to listen to the de facto regime's reasons for carrying out the events of June 28 and said that history would judge their actions. Micheletti said Hondurans are afraid of President Jose Manuel "Mel" Zelaya and it was Zelaya who was going to carry out a coup, but the regime prevented him from doing so on June 28. Micheletti said Zelaya was corrupt and that it is not possible to restore someone to office who stole funds from the state's coffers. Micheletti also said that Zelaya took instructions from Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez. He added that he knew that the U.S. would not allow communism to take root in Honduras.

14. (C) Micheletti called the accusation of trying to stall for time unfair. He told A/S Shannon that he gave the three-member commission representing him at the Guaymuras dialogue liberty of action, but that it was not possible to engage in dialogue with the Zelaya side as long as they opposed the general election scheduled for November 29. He added that the Zelaya commissioners backtracked from the position they took at the negotiating table each time they

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consulted with Zelaya. Micheletti said that, even though a recent poll indicated 87 percent of Hondurans opposed the "third option" solution to the crisis, he was ready to resign to avoid bloodshed as long as elections were assured. (Note: The third option solution would have both Micheletti and Zelaya resign with another Honduran taking over the government until the January 27 inauguration of the president elected on November 29. Nearly all recent polls show that President Zelaya is more popular than Micheletti and that most Hondurans, as high as 70 percent in a recent Greenburg poll, support Micheletti's resignation. With regards to Zelaya's restitution, the nation is split almost 50-50 between those who want Zelaya back and those opposed. End Note.) Micheletti told A/S Shannon that he was concerned about the termination of U.S. assistance, but that Hondurans would survive without it, saying the country had enough corn and beans. Micheletti noted the close ties that exist between the U.S. and Honduras and requested that the U.S. delegation pass on his greetings and wishes for a successful administration to President Obama, whom he said he respected.

Elections the Solution

15. (C) Micheletti told A/S Shannon that elections are the solution to the Honduran political crisis and that nothing would prevent them from taking place. He predicted a high voter turnout. He said that if the U.S. decided to recognize the electoral process, other nations, with the exception of the ALBA countries, would follow suit.

16. (C) A/S Shannon told Micheletti that the U.S. wanted to find a way to support the Honduran elections, but that a negotiated agreement was necessary for U.S. support. A/S Shannon said that time was running out and that an agreement had to be reached right away if there was going to be sufficient time for the international community to provide electoral assistance and send elections observers. PDAS Kelly told Micheletti that the U.S. had consulted with other countries and they all wanted a negotiated settlement to be reached before the November 29 elections. Kelly and Restrepo told Micheletti that the instability in Honduras brought on

by the lack of a solution to the political crisis is the chaotic situation that Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez seeks.

Agreement Signed

17. (C) A/S Shannon, PDAS Kelly, Mr. Restrepo, and the Ambassador met again with Micheletti on October 29, after the signing of the Guaymuras Dialogue Tegucigalpa/San Jose Agreement. A/S Shannon told Micheletti that the U.S. wanted to support Honduras in the implementation of the agreement as well as with the elections. A/S Shannon added that the U.S. would work with the Organization of American States (OAS) to ensure that the elections are credible and transparent. Micheletti noted the importance of the U.S. delegation in facilitating the agreement. He pledged to abide by each and every one of the agreement's provisions.
LLORENS